

Dear Jerry,

Please share this e-mail with the NRSP-8 Species Coordinators and general membership. Many thanks for your detailed response to our request for input regarding the future of the NRI 43.1 Animal Genome Reagent and Tool Development competitive grants program. The program will continue to be offered (contingent upon the availability of funding). You will note, however, that the program description will be redesigned and refocused beginning with the FY 2006 NRI Request for Applications (RFA).

In your e-mail, you provided us with a fairly extensive list of suggested topics for discovery research and technology development to be supported by the NRI Animal Genome Reagent and Tool Development competitive grants program. However, we would like to continue to work with the NRSP-8 Species Coordinators to refine the list of topics that you provided so that a focused set of priorities for this program could be developed for future RFAs. NRI funding is limited, so it is extremely important that NRI programs focus on achieving specific long- and short-term goals to deliver reagents and tools that will have the highest impact on the research community and our agency's mission.

We realize that our understanding of the various animal genomes is at a different level for each species. During the next six months, we would like to encourage each NRSP-8 Species Coordinator to work with the members of the species subcommittee to identify the top three priorities for genome reagents and tools for that species. By setting a limited number of specific priorities for each species, we feel that we can most efficiently use the time that is spent by those investigators that write and review proposals. Of equal importance, our limited dollars will be spent on reagents and tools that will be of most value to advancing the understanding of the genomes of agriculturally important animals and aquatic species.

We hope that the NRSP-8 Species Coordinators will accept this opportunity and provide the NRI with a list of their top three priorities for each of the species represented in NRSP-8. We would like your top three priorities for each species by the end of August 2005. While it is too late to include this information in the FY 2006 NRI RFA, we will be happy to include your recommendations during our FY 2007 NRI RFA planning process. Feel free to contact us if we can help you with this important process of setting priorities for this program.

Thanks again for your input regarding the NRI Animal Genome Reagent and Tool Development competitive grants program. We look forward to future interactions with the NRSP-8 community to set specific priorities for this program.

Sincerely,

Anna Palmisano
Deputy Administrator, Competitive Programs